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DEPT FOR ISN/ECC PVANSON, ACHURCH, KCROUCH AND JLCOLLINS;
CBP/INA FOR CDONOFRIO; DOE/NNSA FOR RSTUBBLEFIELD; DOC FOR
ELOCKWOOD-SHABAT; DOT FOR APARAMESWARAN; SECDEF FOR
MHOFFMANN, FLIGHT, AND RVIERKANT
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SUBJECT: EXBS Afghanistan Advisor Monthly Reporting Cable -
June 2006

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I. SUMMARY

1. (SBU) UNODC held a workshop with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) Afghan Border Police (ABP) to discuss ways of improving cross-border crime detection and interception with Afghanistan's neighboring countries Iran and Pakistan.

2. (SBU) The Ministry of Finance (MoF) Afghan Customs Department (ACD) was given permission by the USAF at the 455th AEW in Bagram to provide several ACD inspectors to assess and collect duties of commercial goods entering Bagram. Allegedly, commercial carriers are "piggy-backing" shipments of commercial goods destined for the Afghan open market onto shipments "exempted" from duties as determined by the ACD.

3. (SBU) A timeline of infrastructure projects has been provided by the Afghan Engineering District (AED) for construction projects at the Islam Qalah and Towraghundi Border Crossing Points (BCP) to provide better security, more efficient port operations, and increased revenue collection. DynCorp also announced their planned construction of 2 Forward Operating Bases (FOB) at Islam Qalah in Herat Province and Spin Boldak in Kandahar Province. These FOBs are needed to house DynCorp Mentors closer to the BCPs located in these cities.

4. (SBU) The USG Border Management Initiative (BMI) staff is progressing with the staffing of a 12-person Border Management Task Force (BMTF) consisting of civilian and military personnel and securing office space and housing. The \$9.4 million awarded to the BMTF by DOD will also allow for the hiring of 12 mentors that will be assigned to

selected BCPs. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is assisting in recruiting customs and immigration subject-matter experts. BMI participants from the international donor community and international subject-matter experts will also help make up the task force.

15. (SBU) Meetings were held to discuss the various issues surrounding the Border Management Initiative including the Deputy Ministerial level working group meeting and the BMI Executive Steering Committee. Topics discussed included training issues; employment of narcotic and explosive canine units; coordination of equipment purchases; MoI & MoF cooperation at the BCPs; and identifying illegal border crossings and possible solutions to control or close these crossings.

END SUMMARY

II. ITEMS OF BROAD INTEREST.

16. (SBU) On August 1 & 2, 2006 the EXBS Advisor attended an UNODC workshop with the ABP and GPPO to discuss issues relating to the Green Border (the zone between border crossing points). The border observation posts along the Afghan and Iranian border were considered to be too few with a limited amount of mobile response teams inhibiting the Afghans from detecting illegal border crossings by insurgents and criminal elements. A proposal was made to supply ABP with high-powered night vision equipment coupled with a satellite communications system and GPS technology shared by the ABP and Iranian border guards to effectively detect illegal crossers by relaying their location to the Iranians who are in a better position to intercept insurgents and cross-border criminals.

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17. (SBU) A meeting to establish an intelligence-gathering network with ABP, Iranian and Turkmenistan border guards is scheduled for September 2006 in an attempt to better secure the Western border of Afghanistan and establish compatible and effective ways of collecting and exchanging intelligence. Because of an increase of insurgent and terrorist activities at the border the Pakistanis expressed concern with the lack of intelligence and the exchange of information between their country, the Afghans, and the Iranians. Efforts to fill this gap are being discussed with the respective parties to establish a more formal exchange of information.

18. (SBU) On August 5, 2006 the EXBS Advisor accompanied the Director General of the Afghan Customs Department (ACD), members from CFC-A and an MPRI planning representative to the USAF at the 455th AEW in Bagram to finalize steps required by Commanding Brigadier General Miller allowing 3 Afghan Customs inspectors to work on the base. The inspectors will assess and collect duties from commercial carriers bringing in commercial goods destined for the Afghan open markets. The inspectors are expected to be in place sometime in September 2006. The ACD is also planning on duplicating this effort at the Kandahar AIR Field (KAF) where additional commercial goods enter the open market of Afghanistan.

19. (SBU) On several occasions during this reporting period, the EXBS attended meetings with the World Bank, USAID, the Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB), ministries of Interior, Commerce and Finance, UNOPS and the ACD. Issues being addressed include a Bonded Carrier System Pilot Project on the Iranian border at the Islam Qalah Border Crossing Point (BCP) and the Herat Inland Container Depot (ICD); bonded warehouse system; additional efforts required to establish and train public and private Customs Brokers; purchase of BCP port operations equipment to be leased out by MoC to private contractors for port operators; establishment of Border Control Zones, Border Customs

Clearance Zones, Bonded Warehouse Zones, and Commercial Free Zones as required at the 13 major Afghan BCPs; Customs seal system; trader bank guarantees; automated bank system for daily transfer of collected revenue into the GoA's Da Afghan Band (DAB); establishment of an official Afghan exchange rate; tariff policy established in the Trade & Investment Policy; establishment of stricter controls of imports/exports; stricter laws governing Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and traders; and training infrastructure for the 3 major border elements, Afghan Border Police (ABP), Afghan Customs Police (ACP), and Customs authorities.

¶10. (SBU) On August 11, 2006 the EXBS Advisor participated in the BMI working group met to address the following main topics of discussion:

a) Advanced and cross training the ACP and Customs Officials is scheduled to begin in September upon the completion of the Customs training facility in Kabul. The Guardia di Finanza will be allowed to teach border elements in these courses at the DynCorp Regional Training Center (RTC) in Herat Province. The Iranians have also been invited by the ACD to provide trainers and have shown an interest in fulfilling previously agreed upon cross-border cooperation.

b) The German Police Project Office (GPPPO) is constructing

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a facility to house 60 canines scheduled for delivery to Kabul in December 2006. Subsequently, 15 canines and their handlers will be trained per class beginning in January ¶2007. The ABP will be responsible for the program and the dispatch of the canine units to the 13 major BCPs and the 4 international airports for detection of narcotics and explosives.

c) The BMI has emphasized the importance of streamlining donor procurements of equipment to ensure compatibility and avoid duplication. The EXBS Advisor compiled a list of equipment for BCPs, ABP, and Customs officials that are either in place, previously funded to be procured, or unfunded. EXBS is in the process of procuring \$1.3 million of inspection and detection equipment for Islam Qalah and the Towraghundi BCPs. Other equipment has been procured or funded by the EC; UNOPS; UNDP; UNODC; CSTC-A; GPPPO; and JIACG. MoI and MoF are developing an inventory control system.

d) The EXBS Advisor worked with the ACD to established new criteria for Customs duty exemption applicants after learning that many of the applications were found to be rubber stamped, forged, misrepresented, and containing false statements. World Bank CURE has assisted the ACD in establishing new procedures to control the issuance of these documents including a panel of several reviewers to establish a better system of checks and balances.

¶11. (SBU) On August 14, 2006 the EXBS Advisor and the BMI Director met with a representative from the Japanese Embassy to discuss their willingness to provide \$5 million to fund the Ai Khanem BCP in Takhar Province on the Afghan/Tajikistan border. The involved parties are currently reviewing this proposal. The EC has taken on the responsibility and cost of constructing BCP infrastructure for the remaining BCPs in the Takhar Province, namely Nuzay, Shegnan, Eshkashem. None of these BCPs are part of the 13 major BCPs identified by the GoA but vital for cross-border travel and for promoting trade.

¶12. (SBU) Progress has been made by BMI on establishing a 12-man Border Management Task Force (BMTF) comprised of US civilian and military personnel, international donors, and 12 former DHS and international customs and immigration

subject-matter experts to be employed as mentors at selected BCPs. The EXBS Advisor will participate on this task force to ensure EXBS program requirements are incorporated in the border management initiatives. This task force is expected to be in place no later than November 2006 for an 18-month period prior to the transfer of BMI related responsibility over to the GoA. Efforts are also underway to establish a Border Management Commission comprised of ministerial representatives and chaired by an appointed Director. The BMTF will vet their initiatives through the Commission rather than working through these issues with each Ministry separately.

¶13. (SBU) On August 16, 2006 the EXBS Advisor and the BMI staff met with representatives from JIACG to discuss the funding and recruiting requirements of the BMTF. JIACG stated that they are taking steps to procure several x-ray and gamma scanners for use at the Islam Qalah, Towraghundi, and Shir Khan Bandar BCPs.

¶14. (SBU) On August 24, 2006 the EXBS Advisor and the BMI Director met with DynCorp mentors at the Kabul International Airport (KIA) to discuss the lack of perimeter security and

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requested an assessment to identify the requirements needed to secure the airport grounds. Although passengers are screened and baggage examined prior to entering the terminal and the recent installment of GPPD provided security features in the KIA terminal, there still exists windows of opportunity for the introduction of contraband and security threats into the airport environment. The BMI has begun to explore ways to address these shortfalls and identify international donors capable of funding major improvements required for a secure civil aviation environment.

¶15. (SBU) In September 2006, a delegation from Italy of the Guardia di Finanza is scheduled to arrive in Herat at the Italian PRT to meet with Commanding Officer General Errico to discuss their role in Afghanistan as trainers for Afghan police and Customs officials. The Italian Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) has been adamant that the Guardia di Finanza trainers totaling as many as 10 will be required to reside at the Italian PRT in Herat and requested they be allowed to teach at DynCorp's Regional Training Center (RTC) located nearby. As a result, the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) office has agreed to allow the Guardia di Finanza to train border elements at their RTC in Herat. The ACD also agreed to allow the Guardia di Finanza to train Customs Police and Customs officials at the Herat Customhouse.

¶16. (SBU) On August 31, 2006 the BMI Executive Steering Committee met to discuss and address concerns of the following topics of discussion:

- a) The ACD have had successful talks with the Iranians who will provide trainers for Customs officials in Kabul and are reviewing their interest with constructing the infrastructure at the BCP in Zaranj in the Nimroz Province.
- b) Reports of the Governor from Nimroz Province interfering with proper Customs operations and revenue collection at the BCP in Zaranj has prompted the MoF and MoI to address this issue by speaking with the Governor and to President Karzai to resolve any further inference.
- c) The BMI has submitted a draft of a presidential decree to MoF for the establishment of the Border Management Commission. Upon review and approval, the decree will be presented to President Karzai.
- d) USAID will be providing a strategic review team from Washington DC to work with the BMI partners in drafting a

comprehensive border management strategic plan that can be formally adopted by the GoA.

- e) The MoF Deputy Minister expressed concern over continuing revenue leakage of commercial goods transiting the BCPs for clearance at the Inland Container Depots (ICDs). Transition away from this system favoring the clearance of all goods at the BCPs is underway with the planned infrastructure, equipment, and training required at the 13 major BCPs. This transition is expected to be completed sometime in 2008. In the meantime, the ASYCUDA transit reporting system will be in place at several BCPs including the Islam Qalah BCP that is expected to reduce the number of "no shows" at the ICDs.
- f) Illegal border crossings are being identified and a list of these crossings and recommendations for closure or

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management is expected to be submitted and discussed at the next BMI working group meeting in September.

¶17. (SBU) An \$800,000 JIACG-funded project is scheduled to begin in September 2006 by the Afghanistan Engineering District (AED) to construct temporary infrastructure at the Islam Qalah BCP. This infrastructure will include grading of the BCP property, traffic flow barriers, perimeter security fencing, access gates, guardhouses, and security lighting. The JIACG is also funding a \$15 million new BCP facility at Islam Qalah scheduled to begin in November. This facility will include facilities for the ABP and the Customs officials including a commercial terminal for the clearance, inspection and storage of commercial goods. This project is scheduled to be completed in January 2008. AED has begun construction of a new BCP at the Shir Khan Bandar BCP in Kunduz Province on the Tajikistan border scheduled for completion in February 2007. AED is also scheduled to provide additional infrastructure to enhance ABP and Customs facilities previously constructed by GPPO and UNOPS at the Towraghundi BCP.

¶18. (SBU) The EXBS Advisor is working with the GoA to identify property where DynCorp can construct a 10,000 square meter FOB at Spin Boldak in the Kandahar Province to relocate some of their mentors who have been residing in Kandahar. As part of the Afghan National Police Program, a project was funded with 2004 Supplemental Funds from the Counter Narcotics Program to improve the infrastructure at the Spin Boldak BCP. The facilities constructed included an immigration processing building, operations building, barracks and a DFAC. The facilities were completed in May/June of 2006. This has prompted DynCorp to return their mentors to the Spin Boldak BCP after departing the FOB earlier this year to make room for the Canadian forces. The BMI and ACD are seeking donors that will improve the Customs facilities as well including similar measures being taken at the Islam Qalah BCP to better secure that location. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is also providing funding to the ACD that will include a gamma-ray scanner, computers with Internet connection, solar panels, and other office equipment for use at the Spin Boldak BCP. ISAF is increasing security measures in this volatile area and see the security of this BCP essential to assist in carrying out their mission in the surrounding areas.

¶19. (U) TRAINING CONDUCTED DURING REPORTING PERIOD.

Nothing to report.

¶20. (U) EQUIPMENT DELIVERED DURING REPORTING PERIOD.

Nothing to report.

¶21. (U) IMMINENT TRAINING OR EQUIPMENT STATUS UPDATE.

Nothing to report.

¶22. (U) SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS IN EXPORT CONTROLS,
NONPROLIFERATION, OR RELATED BORDER SECURITY.

Nothing to report.

¶23. (U) OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES/EVENTS.

Nothing to report.

¶24. (U) RED FLAG U ISSUES.

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None to report.

¶25. (U) Please direct any questions or comments to Barry F.
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